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Vernon Walters Said Choice for U.N. Post

By Lou Cannon and David Hoffman
Washington Post Staff Writers

President Reagan has decided to name retired lieutenant general Vernon A. Walters to replace Jeane J. Kirkpatrick as ambassador to the United Nations, well-placed administration officials said yesterday.

Walters, the chief diplomatic troubleshooter at the State Department, has the support of Secretary of State George P. Shultz and also is considered acceptable to more conservative elements in the administration.

An accomplished linguist reputed to be fluent in eight languages, Walters served as an aide to President Dwight D. Eisenhower at various summit meetings and was with then-Vice President Richard M. Nixon when his party was stoned by demonstrators in Caracas in 1958.

Nixon appointed Walters deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency in 1972.

In this post Walters was approached by Nixon chief of staff H.R. Haldeman and asked to block an investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation into the Watergate burglary by saying that it would compromise CIA interests in Mexico.

Walters did as he was told but then checked on what Haldeman had said and told White House counsel John Dean that no such interests would be compromised.

"It simply did not occur to me that the chief of staff to the president might be asking me to do something that was illegal or wrong," Walters wrote in his memoirs.

Administration officials who said that Walters would be named by the president said the issue of whether the U.N. post would remain of Cabinet rank still was unresolved.

Reportedly, Kirkpatrick had urged Walters not to accept the job unless it was a Cabinet position, while Shultz does not want it to be a Cabinet post.

The sources said the status of the job would "be worked out soon" by the president but indicated that Walters would accept the post in any case.

Walters retired from the CIA in 1976 and since 1981 has been used widely as a consultant and ambassador-at-large by the State Department.

He served on an advisory committee to Reagan during the 1984 campaign.

Meanwhile, sources also said that Max L. Friedersdorf, a veteran of the Nixon, Ford and Reagan administrations, is discussing the possibility of returning to the White House at the outset of Reagan's second term as chief of liaison with Congress.

Friedersdorf, who held a similar post in 1981, has talked about coming back to the White House with incoming chief of staff Donald T. Regan, but they have not agreed on details, officials said.

Regan has been advised by several leading members of Congress and lobbyists to select a well-respected and experienced chief of congressional liaison because of the difficult battles coming up over the budget, the MX missile and aid to the rebels fighting the Sandinista government of Nicaragua.

Officials said Friedersdorf is interested in returning to the White House but wants a job somewhat removed from day-to-day lobbying and a title such as "counselor" to the president.

Friedersdorf, who left the White House after the first year of the Reagan administration to become ambassador to Bermuda, is vice president for public affairs for PepsiCo Inc. He could not be reached for comment yesterday.

He worked as a congressional lobbyist for Nixon and was later chief lobbyist for President Gerald R. Ford.

He was appointed chairman of the Federal Election Commission in 1977 by President Jimmy Carter.

Regan is expected to appoint four key deputies in the areas of politics, communications, policy and congressional relations. Officials said some of the appointments may come as early as next week while others may wait for several months.

Edward J. Rollins, the former Reagan-Bush campaign director, is expected to be brought back to handle political affairs.